

Performance Audit of San Francisco Street Teams

March 21, 2024

Presentation to the Government Audit & Oversight Committee

San Francisco Board of Supervisors

Budget & Legislative Analyst's Office



Scope

- 5 Years (FY 2017-18 through FY 2021-22)
- 11 street teams managed by:
 - Emergency Management
 - Public Health
 - Fire
 - Homelessness and Supportive Housing



Methodology

- Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards
- August 2022: Entrance Conference
- Many Interviews across various departments
- Reviewed prior reports, internal policies and procedures, org charts, training records, strategic planning documents, and evaluation and assessments
- Evaluated encounter data logged by street teams
- Ride-alongs & site visit to DEM headquarters
- Focus groups
- Survey of peer cities



Methodology (continued)

- July 2023: Submitted draft report to departments
- August 2023: Exit conference with departments
- October 2023: Submitted final draft report to departments to solicit formal responses
- November 7, 2023: final report released



Overview of Findings

- 7 Findings & 20 Recommendations
- Finding Areas:
 1. Planning, Coordination & Communication
 2. Goals and Performance
 3. Data Access, Sharing, & Linkage
 4. Contract Monitoring & Oversight
 5. Resource Referral Capacity
 6. Dispatched Street Team Availability & Demand
 7. Street Team Member Dynamics & Support



1. Planning, Coordination & Communication

- Street team system expanded significantly without a corresponding increase in capacity for planning, coordination, public education or messaging, or data management
- The rapid rollout of the new street teams led to inconsistent public messaging about street team functions and goals, a high volume of coordination meetings, and siloed data systems and a lack of data-sharing.
- Several opportunities to improve and streamline the efficiency and effectiveness of street team planning, coordination, and communications. Many of these needs and opportunities have been identified and improvements are underway.
- 1 Recommendation directed to DEM



2. Goals and Performance

- Some street teams have no publicly reported performance metrics
- Some teams have stated goals and report performance metrics, but the metrics they report do not demonstrate success or progress at achieving their team goals or only partially align with their goals.
- Some teams report metrics that do align with their goals but have limited success in achieving those goals.
- Some teams, including the Street Crisis Response Team, have been successful at achieving one or more of their goals. Two follow-up response teams have or had low connection rates with their clients.
- 5 Recommendations directed to DPH, FIR, DEM, & HSH



3. Data Access, Sharing & Linkage

- FIR, DPH, HSH, & DEM use at least 8 different data collection systems to manage and record street teams encounters and client care.
- These departments are unable to easily share or link client and team activity data between departments or across teams, which:
 - Limits teams' ability to understand a client's full history and may make it harder to connect a client to the best possible resources
 - Prevents the City from analyzing meaningful longitudinal data about street team client outcomes or overall impact of street teams.
- Local, state, and federal legislation creates information-sharing guardrails that have impacted what data can be shared and with whom. However, there is an ongoing effort (ASTRID) to link department datasets together.
- 2 recommendations directed to DEM




4. Contract Performance Monitoring & Oversight

- There have been 9 contracts with 6 organizations involved in the operations of the City's street teams.

- Departments, particularly DPH, are not providing adequate oversight of contractors:
 - 2 of DPH's contractors had not had formal monitoring reports after more than 2.5 years in operations (as of April 2023)
 - A third DPH contractor was taken off a corrective action plan with no explanation or follow-up

- Some street team contractors have not consistently met contractual expectations



4. Contract Performance Monitoring & Oversight (continued)

- DPH contracts with three contractors do not contain adequately specific scopes of work
- 1 DPH contractor was performing work for DPH's Post Oversdose Engagement Team (POET) without an executed contract in place for such work for over 18 months
- 4 recommendations directed to DPH, DEM and HSH



5. Resource Referral Capacity

- Requested referral resources, such as a shelter bed, are not always immediately available to the client at the time of the encounter for Street Crisis Response Team (SCRT), Street Wellness Response Team (SWRT), and Street Overdose Response Team (SORT) encounters
- Between June 2022 and March 2023, a requested resource was unavailable on average 13 percent of the time, or on average five encounters per day
- 84 percent of the time, the cause of resource unavailability is a lack of shelter capacity, either because there is no shelter placement available or because the shelters are closed at the time of the encounter. Shelter capacity is constrained by the City's overall inventory and time and day of the week.
- 3 recommendations directed to DPH, DEM, HSH, FIR, & BOS



6. Dispatched Team Availability & Demand

- Ratios of actual to planned work hours for the City's dispatched street teams, the Street Crisis Response Team (SCRT), Street Wellness Response Team (SWRT), and Street Overdose Response Team (SORT), have been trending downward since inception
- The interdisciplinary nature of the City's dispatched street teams requires staffing and collaboration from at minimum two, and sometimes three, agencies
- Ensuring ongoing, consistent availability of SCRT and SORT units, and going forward, availability of HEART, will require sufficient staffing of team members to be able to backfill team member absences when they occur.



6. Dispatched Team Availability & Demand (continued)

- Since the March 2023 reconfiguration of SCRT and SWRT, SCRT has responded to between 93 and 97 percent of all SCRT (25A1C) calls, and that 25A1C call volume has not significantly increased since July 2022
 - This indicates that SCRT overall has been able to meet the demand for SCRT response. However, data from the San Francisco Emergency Medical Services Agency shows that the number of 9-1-1 calls related to opioid overdoses, and by extension demand for SORT or other overdose-related emergency response, is increasing in San Francisco.

- 2 recommendations directed to DPH, DEM, FIR, & HSH



7. Team Member Dynamics & Support

- There is a perception among some street team staff that support and opportunities for relationship-building among interdisciplinary team members have decreased since the launch of the street teams.
- This perception increases the risk of burnout, turnover, and job dissatisfaction for street team members.
- Opportunities for team members to build relationships with and understand each other, including post-call debrief sessions and periodic informal social gatherings, are important to foster healthy team dynamics and help address differences that can arise while in stressful field situations.
- 3 recommendations directed to FIR, DPH, HSH, & DEM

Questions?

